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LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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10100 Pioneer Boulevard  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

Tel: (562) 347-1500  
Fax: (562) 941-5835


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Health Services  
<http://ems.dhs.lacounty.gov>

November 29, 2012

**TO:** Los Angeles County Licensed Ambulance Operators  
Fire Chief, Each 9-1-1 Provider Agency

**FROM:** Cathy Chidester   
Director, EMS Agency

**SUBJECT: BIENNIAL AMBULANCE RATE ADJUSTMENT FOR  
ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT (ALS) AND BASIC  
LIFE SUPPORT (BLS) RESPONSE TO CALL**

Section 7.16.341 of the County Code requires the Director of the Department of Health Services to review the ALS and BLS ambulance rates of all other counties in California on a biennial basis to determine the average rates for those services in effect in those counties as of the review date. If the rates are equal to or above the State average, no adjustments to maximum allowable rates are made. If the maximum allowable rates are lower than the State average, the rates are adjusted to the State average and rounded to the nearest \$0.25.

The Department's review was conducted between September 3, 2012 and September 28, 2012. Each county was contacted regarding the ambulance rates in effect as of the date of the call. The final rates are based on an average of all ALS rates (excluding Los Angeles), and all BLS rates (excluding Los Angeles County) of those Counties that regulate ambulance rates, divided by the total number of Counties that regulate rates.

Based on the results of the survey, the following maximum allowable rates will be effective **January 1, 2013:**

Advanced Life Support (ALS) Response to Call – **Increase by 5.92% to \$1412.25.**  
Basic Life Support (BLS) Response to Call – **Increases by 4.03% to \$1010.25.**

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All other rates remain the same. Attached is a copy of the General Public Rate Schedule effective January 1, 2013.

If you have any questions, please call John Telmos, Prehospital Programs Manager at (562) 347-1677.

CC:jt  
11-75a

Attachment

C: Fiscal Management  
Los Angeles County Ambulance Association  
City Manager, Each Los Angeles County Based City

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
GENERAL PUBLIC AMBULANCE RATES  
EFFECTIVE January 1, 2013**

**Section 7.16.280 Rate Schedule For Ambulances**

A. An ambulance operator shall charge no more than the following rates for one patient:

|  | <b><u>Effective<br/>January 1, 2013</u></b> |
|--|---|
| 1. Response to call with equipment and personnel at an advanced life support (ALS) level,  | \$1,412.25                                  |
| 2. Response to call with equipment and personnel at a basic life support (BLS) level,  | \$ 1010.25                                  |
| 3. Code 3 used during response or transport, per incident,   | \$ 127.75                                   |
| 4. Code 2 used during response or transport per incident,  | \$ 50.25                                    |
| 5. Mileage Rate. Each mile or fraction thereof,  | \$ 18.50                                    |
| 6. Waiting Time. For each 15-minute period or fraction thereof after the first 15 minutes of waiting time at the request of the person hiring the ambulance                    | \$ 50.25                                    |
| 7. Standby Time. The base rate for the prescribed level of service and, in addition, for each 15-minute period or fraction thereof after the first 15 minutes of standby time, | \$ 48.25                                    |

B. This section does not apply to a contract between the ambulance operator and the County where different rates or payment mechanisms are specified.

**Section 7.16.310 Special Charges**

A. An ambulance operator shall charge no more than the following rates for special ancillary services:

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| 1. Request for service after 7:00 p.m. and before 7:00 a.m. of the next day will be subject to an additional maximum charge of | \$ 82.75 |
| 2. Persons requiring oxygen shall be subject to an additional maximum charge per tank or fraction thereof, of                  | \$ 64.25 |
| 3. Backboard, splints, KED   | \$ 50.00 |
| 4. Traction splints  | \$ 90.75 |

|     |   |           |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 5.  | Transport non-company staff medical personnel - first one-half hour   | \$ 32.00  |
| 6.  | Neonatal transport  | \$ 191.00 |
| 7.  | Ice packs   | \$ 26.75  |
| 8.  | Bandages, dressings   | \$ 26.75  |
| 9.  | Oxygen cannula/mask   | \$ 26.75  |
| 10. | Cervical collar   | \$ 45.00  |
| 11. | Obstetrical kit   | \$ 49.00  |
| 12. | Burn kit  | \$ 49.00  |
| 13. | Nurse critical care transport - per hour  | \$ 228.00 |
| 14. | Volume ventilator   | \$ 172.00 |
| 15. | Respiratory therapist for the first three hours, and \$114.50 per hour after the first three hours  | \$ 259.75 |
| 16. | Pulse oximeter  | \$ 86.75  |
| 17. | Infusion pump (per line)  | \$ 86.75  |
| 18. | Automated external defibrillator (AED)  | \$ 86.75  |
| 19. | Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP)  | \$ 86.75  |
| 20. | Where other special services are requested or needed by any patient or authorized representative thereof, a reasonable charge commensurate with the cost of furnishing such special service may be made, provided that the ambulance operator shall file with the Director of the Department of Health Services a schedule of each special service proposed and the charge therefore, which charge shall be effective unless modified, restricted, or denied by the Director of the Department of Health Services. Special services are defined as services provided to a patient that are unique and individual to a specific patient's needs, and are performed on a limited basis. |           |

Charges for special services provided to patients that are new services, but will become an industry standard, must be reviewed and a rate commensurate with the service developed prior to ambulance operators charging such rate to the general public. Such rates shall not be charged to patients until approved by the board of Supervisors.

- B. This section does not apply to a contract between an ambulance operator and the county where different rates or payment mechanisms are specified.

### **Section 7.16.340    Modification of Rates.**

The maximum rates chargeable to the general public as set forth in Sections 7.16.280 and 7.16.310 of this chapter shall be adjusted effective July 1, 1992, and on July 1st of each year thereafter, to reflect changes in the value of the dollar. For each of the one year periods respectively beginning July 1, 1992 and July 1, 1993 such adjustments shall be made by multiplying the base amounts by the percentage change in the transportation portion of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Western Region, as compiled and reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the 12-month period ending with the last day of the prior month of February. Beginning July 1, 1994, and on each July 1 thereafter, such adjustments shall be determined by multiplying the base amounts by the average of the percentage changes of the transportation portion and of the medical portion of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, Western Region, as compiled and reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the 12-month period ending with the last day of the prior month of February. The result so determined shall be rounded to nearest \$0.25 and added or subtracted, as appropriate, to the rate. The Director of the Department of Health Services shall initiate implementation of these rate changes by notifying in writing each licensed private ambulance operator in Los Angeles County thereof, and any other individual or agency requesting such notification from the Director. Such notice shall be sent by first class mail no later than June 15 of the prior rate period.

### **7.16.341        Periodic Base Rate Review.**

The maximum base rates for ALS and BLS services, as reflected in Section 7.16.280, shall be reviewed in accordance with the following procedures, and adjusted, if appropriate, effective first on January 1, 2005, and later, also if appropriate, on January 1 of every other year thereafter.

On or about July 1 of the year prior to the January 1 adjustment date, the Director of the Department of Health Services shall review the ALS and BLS ambulance rates of all other counties in California to determine the average rates for these services in effect for these counties as of the review date. If the Los Angeles County rates are equal to or above average, no adjustment to the Los Angeles County Code rates will be made under this provision. If one or both of the Los Angeles County rates are less than the average, then an appropriate adjustment to the rate or rates shall be made to bring it (them) to the average. Any required adjustment shall be rounded to the nearest \$0.25.

The Director of the Department of Health Services shall initiate implementation of these rate adjustments by notifying in writing each licensed private ambulance operator in Los Angeles County thereof, and any other individual or agency who has requested such notification from the Director. Such notice shall be sent by first class mail no later than December 15 of the prior rate period.

Nothing herein is intended to prevent licensed ambulance operators from demonstrating that ALS and BLS rates in Los Angeles County fail to provide operators with a reasonable rate of return on their investment. A licensed operator at any time may submit to the Director of the Department of Health Services its cost and revenue data, and other pertinent documentation which the Director may require for this purpose.

If this information evidences to the Director's satisfaction that the ALS rate or BLS rate, or both, fail to provide the operator with a reasonable rate of return, the Director shall propose a different base rate structure to the board of Supervisors for consideration.

ALS Base Rate change: 01/01/13 to 06/30/13 = 5.92%  
 BLS Base Rate change: 01/01/13 to 16/30/13 = 4.03%  
 All other rate changes: unchanged